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## **PRESS RELEASE**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **NOGALES MAN SENTENCED TO OVER 3 YEARS FOR ALIEN SMUGGLING**

**TUCSON** – The U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Arizona announced that on June 24, 2004, Adrian Alexis Collelmo-Bernal, DOB 9/10/81, of Nogales, Ariz., was sentenced to 41 months imprisonment by U.S. District Judge Frank R. Zapata, in Tucson, Ariz.

On March 6, 2004, a Nogales police officer was traveling southbound on Grand Avenue in Nogales, Ariz. and observed a van with a temporary license plate being driven northbound by the defendant. Based on his observations of the vehicle and its occupants, the officer turned around and proceeded northbound. The defendant made a sharp turn and quickly sped into a parking lot. The defendant got out of his vehicle, walked towards the officer and immediately stated that he wasn't driving. The defendant further stated that he was going to see his attorney, even though it was seven o'clock on a Saturday morning and all of the businesses in the parking lot were closed.

The officer observed five individuals lying down in the back of the vehicle. U.S. Border Patrol later determined that these individuals were Mexican citizens in the United States illegally. The illegal aliens later identified the defendant as their driver and guide. The defendant, a U.S.

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citizen, admitted to Border Patrol that he was being paid to transport the illegal aliens. Subsequent investigation revealed that the defendant had a prior conviction in 2000 for alien smuggling and that in 1999 and 2000 he was apprehended and voluntarily returned to Mexico upon claiming that he was a Mexican national.

The defendant entered a plea of guilty to an Information charging him with Transportation of Illegal Aliens for the purpose of financial gain in violation of Title 8, U.S.C. § 1324(a)(1)(A)(ii) and 1324(a)(1)(B)(i).

The investigation in this case was conducted by U.S. Border Patrol and the Nogales Police Department.

The prosecution was handled by Susan A. Baumann, Special Assistant U.S. Attorney, District of Arizona, Tucson, Ariz.

CASE NUMBER: 04-0162M  
RELEASE NUMBER: 2004-121

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